



Navigating the perfect storm: Strategies for fleet management amid market and policy pressures

Fleet managers today face unprecedented challenges, making it increasingly difficult to maintain the traditional three-year vehicle replacement cycle. A mix of global disruptions, stringent environmental mandates, economic pressures and changing tax incentives has left fleet operators with little choice but to extend vehicle lifespans to adapt to the evolving landscape.

The UK's Zero Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) Mandate presents a significant challenge, requiring 16% of all vans sold to be electric by 2025 – approximately 55,000 vehicles. However, with current demand for electric vans at just 5.6% of the market, manufacturers are already struggling to meet these ambitious targets.

To avoid fines of up to £18,000 per non-compliant van, some manufacturers are delaying diesel van deliveries until 2025, and there is speculation that others may consider withdrawing van production from the UK altogether. This could result in a drastic reduction in the availability of internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles for the UK market. For fleet operators, this means fewer choices and increased pressure to extend the lifespan of their existing vehicles. Without a sharp rise in demand for electric vans, the industry risks a supply shortfall of approximately 221,000 vans by 2025 – highlighting the potential disruption the mandate could cause.

Adapting Fleet Management Strategies for Aging Vehicles

To respond to limited vehicle availability and extended lifespans, fleet managers need targeted strategies that ensure safety, compliance, and performance over time. Key approaches include:

- **Robust Pre-Use Inspections:** Routine inspections are critical for identifying issues before they escalate, ensuring extended lifecycles do not compromise vehicle safety. These proactive checks allow for early detection of wear, minimising the risk of major repairs and maintaining roadworthiness.

- **Age-Based Maintenance:** As vehicles



age, they may require more frequent servicing, especially for high-wear components such as brakes, belts and suspension systems. An age-based approach to Service, Maintenance, and Repair (SMR) helps prevent costly breakdowns, enhances reliability and reduces unexpected downtime.

- **Optimal Replacement Cycles:** Leveraging data-driven SMR tracking allows fleet managers to determine replacement needs based on actual vehicle condition rather than a fixed timeline. By monitoring age, mileage and maintenance costs, fleets can make informed replacement decisions that balance cost-effectiveness with performance.

- **Synchronised Maintenance Scheduling:** By using centralised data, fleet managers can align maintenance schedules with each vehicle's unique needs. This approach increases vehicle availability and minimises operational disruptions, allowing for smoother, more efficient fleet management.

A Proven Approach for Extended Lifecycles

Peter Golding, CEO of FleetCheck, highlights the HGV sector's approach to managing long vehicle lifespans as a model.

"There are valuable lessons we can learn here," he says. "Whether it's PSVs, HGVs, or even taxis, extended lifespans are the norm. With the right approach to maintenance and management, these practices can be applied across various fleets, emphasising the value of long-term maintenance and careful planning."

Thriving Through the Perfect Storm with Data-Driven Insights

FleetCheck, recognised by the *Fleet News* readership for four consecutive years, offers the tools necessary to manage longer vehicle lifecycles effectively. With features like defect management, proactive maintenance planning, total cost of ownership reporting and data-driven replacement strategies, FleetCheck enables fleet managers to keep vehicles safe, compliant, and cost-effective.

Though the road ahead is uncertain, FleetCheck is committed to supporting fleets through current and future challenges. By leveraging advanced fleet management technology, fleet managers can navigate today's turbulent environment, be better prepared for tomorrow's demands and thrive – even in this perfect storm.



Keep your fleet rolling for longer.

Recognised by Fleet News readers for four consecutive years, **FleetCheck** equips you with the essential tools to manage longer vehicle lifecycles confidently.

From proactive maintenance and defect management to total cost reporting and replacement planning, FleetCheck helps extend vehicle lifespans and keeps you on top of every vehicle's performance, maintenance, and compliance. With real-time alerts, data-driven reports, and actionable insights on your entire fleet in one intuitive platform, FleetCheck keeps your fleet rolling smoothly.

